



The President's Daily Brief



13 April 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

13 April 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Weekend skirmishing in Laos centered on the government guerrilla base at Sam Thong, a few miles to the northwest of Long Tieng. (Page 1)

On Page 2, [redacted]

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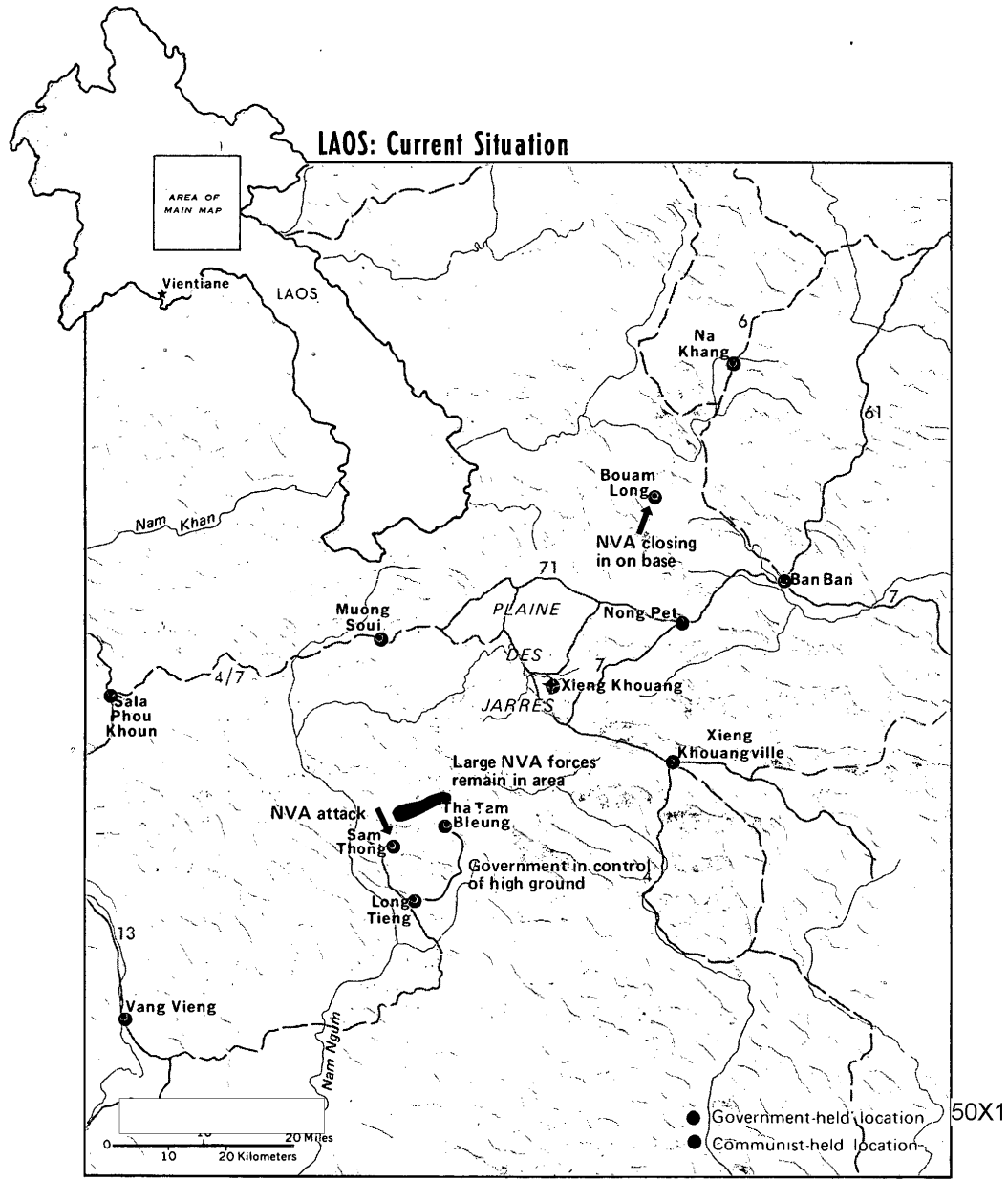
In the Soviet Union, two veteran regional party bosses have been reassigned to jobs in Moscow dealing with economics and technology. (Page 3)

Vietnamese Communist forces are keeping up the pressure in two Cambodian border provinces. (Page 4)

South Vietnamese veteran and student agitation has tapered off. (Page 4)

[redacted] Soviets [redacted] (Page 4)

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LAOS

In the most significant ground action over the weekend, North Vietnamese forces launched an unsuccessful ground assault against the government base at Sam Thong early yesterday morning. This attack, the enemy's second major attempt to overrun the base within a week, proved costly to both sides--about 30 Communist attackers were killed, as were 15 government defenders. The government has moved reinforcements into the camp and is still holding all its positions, but late reports indicate enemy troops are again moving on the base from the north.

Although the enemy still poses a significant threat to Sam Thong, government guerrillas now are in control of all the prominent ridges to the north between Long Tieng and Tha Tam Bleung.

The North Vietnamese are continuing to strengthen their supply lines southwest of the Plaine des Jarres. Recently, a North Vietnamese rear services unit moved into the area immediately northwest of Tha Tam Bleung.

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North of the Plaine, Communist forces are edging closer to the government base at Bouam Long. Government defenders have pulled back from a key position guarding the southwestern approaches, and North Vietnamese troops have begun probing defenses within a mile of the base.

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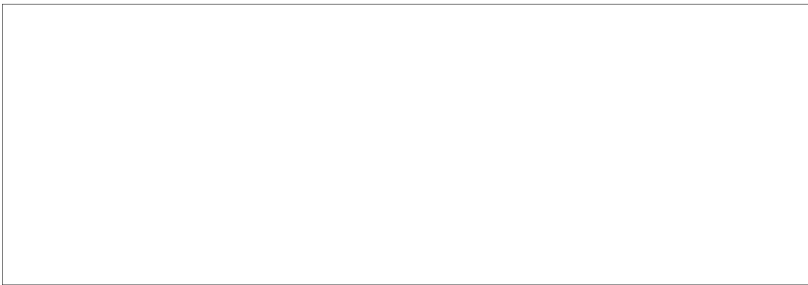
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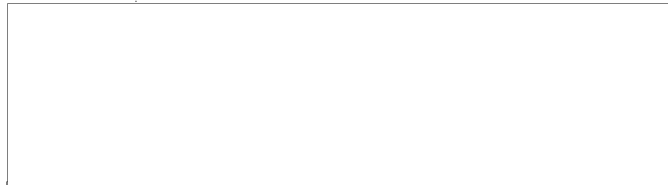
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USSR

Pravda on 11 April announced the appointments of two regional party bosses to government jobs dealing with economic planning and technology. L. N. Yefremov was named first deputy chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology; and T. I. Sokolov was appointed first deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee.

Both men, who have specialized in management of agriculture, have been in eclipse for the past several years. Yefremov was demoted from the Presidium (Politburo) following Khrushchev's removal. Sokolov had run into trouble earlier, during the period when he was responsible for party affairs in the virgin lands.

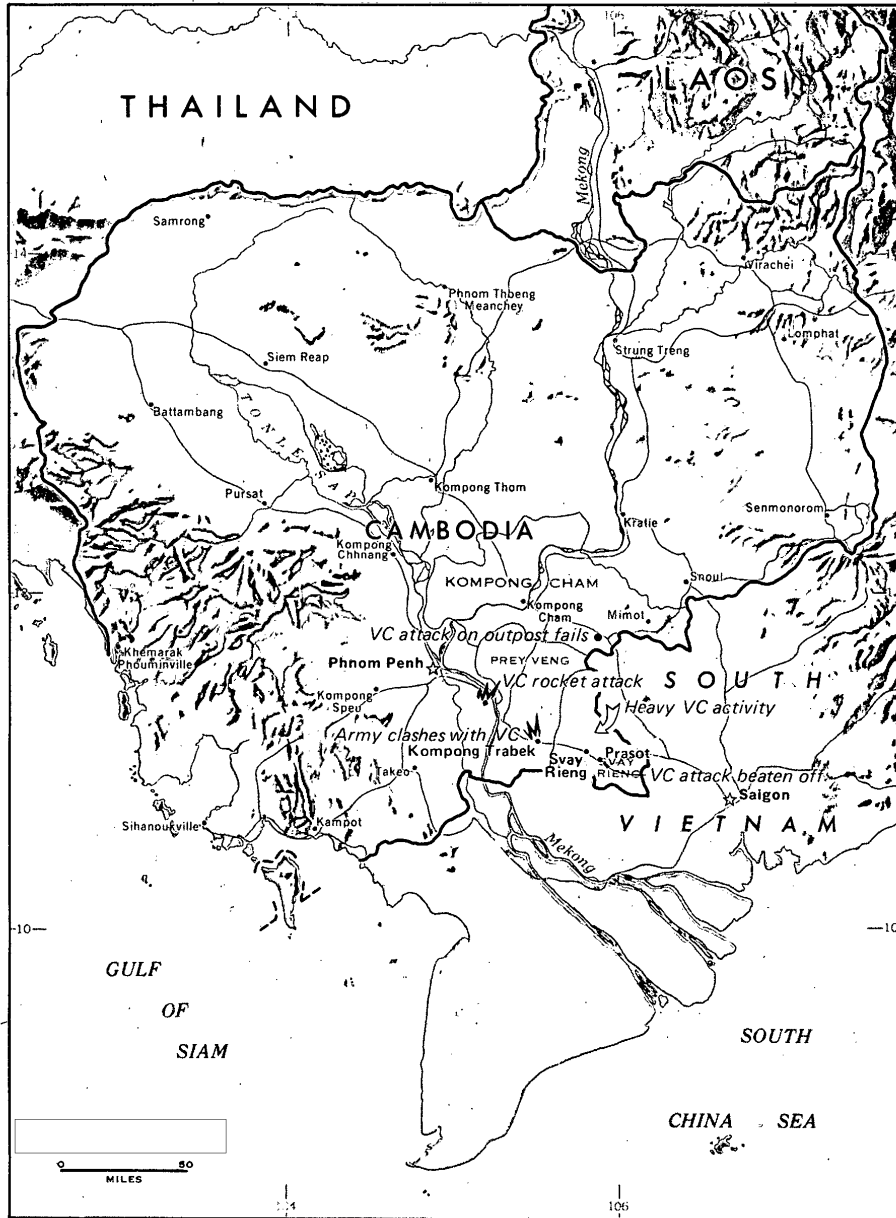
Ambassador Beam says that both appointments may be demotions, since the two men stand a chance of losing the Central Committee status that went along with their former jobs. In the short run their appointments to the government bureaucracy represent an effort by the party to strengthen its control over the management of the ailing Soviet economy. Last December, Brezhnev harshly criticized the poor economic performance of 1969 and placed much of the blame on the government bureaucracy.

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Vietnamese Communists Maintaining Military Pressure



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NOTES

Cambodia: The Communists are maintaining military pressure on government forces near the border. Large numbers of Viet Cong troops are still operating in eastern Svay Rieng Province, where another Communist attack on Prasot was beaten off Saturday.

The Communists are also more active in Prey Veng Province. Intercepted army messages indicate the presence of sizable Communist concentrations in Prey Veng, some of which are relatively far in from the border.

South Vietnam: Veteran and student demonstrators for the moment at least are holding their fire. Most veterans seem willing to await the outcome of pending National Assembly action on new benefits. They also appear disposed to give the government a little time to deliver on its promise of new housing. The students, too, have been fairly quiet the last few days. But some of the more militant of them may be spurred into renewed agitation by the government's announcement yesterday that, beginning on 20 April, a military court will try 21 students on charges of treason or otherwise endangering national security.

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